

PARENT INFORMATION 3

Strategies 4 Getting Things Done With HEN and POP

Your child has to do - and remember - a lot in a school day; lessons to learn, rules to follow, friends to make, friendship issues to sort out, new teachers, different demands... Then come the after-school commitments, chores, homework... Creating systems for success that help your child to Approach tasks confidently with persistence and using Supa Thinking, makes sense in their busy lives – and also yours.

Approach is the second A of The Triple A's 4 Getting Things Done. Your child has learned about The HEN Strategy today:

H	Hardest	Do the HARDEST thing first – and get it done.
E	Easiest	Do the EASIEST thing first and get motivated and moving.
N	Nearest	Do the NEAREST thing first – do first what's due first.

What's your Approach to Getting Things Done? Does it vary? Do you prioritise tasks according to their difficulty, likely boredom factor, due date, how much you enjoy them, how quickly you can get them done and build momentum? It's important to think about your Approach to tasks because it helps to teach your child about building a system for managing their own.

Think of the manner in which your child eats a meal. Perhaps they eat the nicest part first and leave the other items until last, or maybe they eat everything they don't like first and save the nicest parts for last. These behaviours often give clues as to how your child also Approaches other tasks.

Planning and organisation are two very important skills for children to Apply to Getting Things Done. Of course, mostly the tasks that take planning and organisation are usually not the ones that have a child wildly cheering, "Woohoo, hooray, I've got to remember to take my homework folder in tomorrow!" The fuel in the Resilience Tank to Get Things Done is definitely persistence and the ability to stick at a task until complete - despite the task being difficult, boring, repetitive or simply uninteresting - is the essence of persistence.

The third A of The Triple A's 4 Getting Things Done is Apply, and has been taught using The POP Strategy:

P	Planning	The ability to decide how to do a task (HEN is useful here).
O	Organisation	Having the necessary resources on hand to achieve success.
P	Persistence	Supa Thinking that fuels a 'work tough' attitude for staying-power and grit.

Most aspects of adult life require Planning, Organisation and Persistence. **Every** aspect of parenting requires Planning, Organisation and Persistence. From the moment the eyes open in the morning and the feet hit the floor, to the moment the eyes close at night, parents are busy Planning, Organising and Persisting. Why then isn't it the topic of conversation? It is of course modelled, but is it made clear, pointed out and specified how you plan and organise and what you need to think to be able to persist?

If your child experiences success Approaching a task and Applying themselves to Getting it Done, it follows that their self-talk will be Supa Thinking: 'I can do this!' or, 'I'll be finished soon' or, 'It's not that bad.'

Supa Thinking, done repeatedly, gives children a sense of optimism and is a very important concept for home and for school. Optimistic thinking means that a child (or adult) is more likely to see something as achievable, manageable and even enjoyable – even if it's something that they don't want to do. Here is an example of the development of optimistic Supa Thinking.

You have asked your child to clean the rabbit hutch. It's not their favourite task, but they know it doesn't take long, and there's a sense of satisfaction in seeing the happy bunny hopping in the straw when the job is done. Your child thinks, 'It won't take long; I'll do it straight away. It's not that bad.' Later you ask your child to put the bins out and because they already have a sense of satisfaction at completing a job, their optimistic thinking comes into play. 'It won't take long; I'll do it straight away. It's not that bad.'

What's happening is that your child's brain 'wiring' is changing. Instead of immediate Stinking Thinking – 'Why Me? It's not fair! I always have to do everything!' your child's brain is learning a pattern of thinking that is positive and helpful.

Wonderfully, this process of brain-wiring can help your child over their entire life-time. A child who is taught how to manage their thinking and strategies for Approaching tasks and Applying themselves to Getting Things Done, is laying down pathways in their brain that will serve them well for the rest of their life.

This week take the time to observe your child's patterns of Approaching tasks and Applying themselves. The more they use the strategies, the more success they'll experience and the more powerful their Confident, Persistent and Resilient Supa Thinking will be - which fuels their Learning CPR Tank.

REFLECTION POINT:

Understanding your own patterns of motivation and avoidance when it comes to Getting Things Done is important – it is part of your brain-wiring. Patterns of success can be initiated by the smallest action – treating yourself to a new pen before sitting down to fill in all the forms for your new passport. Something as simple as that can motivate new patterns of behaviour. Many people buy a size smaller swim suit for the new season to inspire better eating behaviours - simple ways to motivate positive and productive patterns of behaviour.

What patterns of avoidance and motivation does your child have? Is there a small action that you can take to change that pattern? It's often simpler than you think.